

## Real Life is Eternal

It is April already and all around South Manchester nature is bursting into bloom. Just outside my window I can see two trees that are suddenly full of gorgeous pink blossoms and not too far away, several magnificent magnolia trees are getting ready to display their full spring glory for just a few fabulous days.

We can learn so much from trees. They withstand all kinds of weather without complaining. Their leaves seem to die every year and yet they always return in the spring. Trees even support one another by communicating to each other through their roots. So as Easter approaches, even if you have no Christian belief in the resurrection of Christ, I wonder whether you might marvel at the annual resurrection of trees in full leaf and contemplate on the deepest truth about life which is that nothing ever truly dies. Everything in our world is at heart pure energy and this energy constantly changes form, including us. Physical forms certainly appear to die, but the energy that animates all physical form is immortal and so death is in a way one vast, terrifying illusion.

Even though death is ultimately quite unreal, it is the greatest human problem and our deepest fear. Look at how the fear of death has swept our nation in the last year or so and what fear has done to us as a nation. I was so shocked to hear the other day that a woman in her 80s who had been vaccinated against Covid invited two elderly friends around to have cup of afternoon tea in her garden. Later that night after she had gone to bed, the police knocked on her door to tell her that a neighbour had complained to them that she had broken the Covid law. What sort of person would possibly do that to a sweet old lady? A person driven mad by their fear of dying from Covid that's who!

Throughout this pandemic, I really have not felt much fear, just a lot of frustration at the endless restrictions on my taken for granted old freedoms. I think that the main reason that I have not been too fearful is that I have done quite a lot of healing around my fear of death which was quite extreme when I was a young woman. I have been so blessed to go through Jason Chan's Ling Chi Healing Course three times, because on that course, we directly confronted our fear of death and dying. Once I had gone through imagining all sorts of deaths, including being executed by having my head chopped off (I know, seriously weird, what can I say?) I began to really believe that in some way I would survive the death of my body. This new belief really made a huge difference to my deep fear that the death of my body would be the absolute end of me.

The other big change in my belief system that has helped me overcome my fear of death is the belief that at heart we are all not just flowing energy, but pure love energy. On the physical level, we were created by a sperm and egg coming together, but at a much deeper level, we were created by Love Itself as love, and this universal out-of-this-world love can never be destroyed, not even by an all-out nuclear war.

I know that I cannot convince someone who truly believes that death of the body is the end of them that their consciousness will go on even after their physical body is no more. But I feel drawn as Easter approaches to share the message about death from my long-term spiritual guide *A Course in Miracles*. The Course states that most Christians have totally misunderstood Christ's crucifixion. Jesus Christ did not die in such an absolutely horrific way to atone for the terrible sins of other human beings. He actually volunteered to go through the very worst torture and murder human beings could inflict on one of their own to show that although his body was totally destroyed in the process, his true being was completely unharmed. He then demonstrated this ultimate spiritual truth by coming back from the dead to say 'Hi guys, it's me again. Look, feel my body, I am absolutely fine. No real harm done whatsoever!! (I am paraphrasing his message somewhat here)

*A Course in Miracles* reframes Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection as an extreme teaching on the real nature of forgiveness. If our true-self cannot ever be destroyed, and if absolutely everything that happens to us in this world is just a passing dream or nightmare that we are dreaming, then we have no real reason not to forgive anyone who seems – in our dream – to inflict terrible harm on us.

Now I know that this radical idea can sound crazy. It certainly did to me when I first started to study and practice all the lessons in *A Course in Miracles*. This radical truth can also easily become distorted. 'You should forgive me for abusing you because it is just a dream that you are having and therefore I do not have to take any responsibility for my abusive actions in *your* dream'. NO! NO! NO!

On this level of reality, we all have to take total responsibility for acting ethically. We should definitely always refrain from inflicting any kind of harm on any other sentient creature, even with an unkind word. But at the same time, we can at least wonder whether when someone else seems to inflict lasting damage on us, it may just be part of some crazy life-long dream we are dreaming. Maybe one day, we will wake up from this dream that we call 'my life' and realise with great joy, 'Wow! No *real* harm was ever done to the *real* me.'

This radical idea has given me great comfort over the last 20 years or so that I have been studying *A Course in Miracles*. Do I still get really angry when someone seems to do or say something hurtful to me? You can bet your life I do. However, the big change that has slowly occurred over many years is that I can now let go and forgive these hurts much more quickly and easily than I could in the past. This letting go of my sense of being a victim of life has made my whole life a lot easier, a lot less fearful, and a lot more filled with genuine love and compassion than it used to be.

So I apologise that some of this Easter message seems a bit off the wall. But my excuse is that I just sat down to type a quick April message because the one I originally wrote for this month mysteriously disappeared from my computer - and this is what came out.

I would like to conclude this Easter 21 message by wishing you all a miraculous Easter time. May your days be filled with joy and wonder as you see life springing up all around you. May this glorious springtime remind you that the cycle of life is eternal and that death, in all its many guises, is not ultimately real.

Peggy Foster  
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